

Main Street (Early Stone House)
West side of Main Street
Washington
Mason County
Kentucky

HABS No. KY-125

HABS
KY,
81-WASH,
6-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MAIN STREET (EARLY STONE HOUSE)

HABS No. KY-125

Location: Main Street (Old U.S. Route 68), Washington, Mason County, Kentucky.

Latitude: 38° 36' 34" Longitude: 83° 48' 33"

Present Owner: Mrs. James Allen.

Present Occupant: James Hickock.

Present Use: Residence.

Significance: This two-story stone residential structure is the surviving example of several early stone buildings built in Washington in the early 19th century. Its simple, sturdy form and style reflect the character of the early town in transition from frontier settlement to prosperous community. The graceful interior stairway and paneled fireplace walls illustrate the careful craftsmanship and attention to detail with which the building was constructed.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The construction date is not known. However, a construction date between 1808 and 1820 is possible, since simple stone houses of this type were built in Kentucky for several decades after the Revolutionary War, from the 1780s until the first quarter of the 19th century. When the property was sold in 1799, the deed in the chain of title mentioned the recent erection of the "frame of a house". The use of the word "frame" would indicate that the building of that date was not the present stone house. This description is also found in the deed of 1808. When the property changed hands in 1839, it consisted of a "stone dwelling house and frame building occupied as a shop". It is unlikely that the house was built after 1820, by which time brick was the more popular building material and was more readily available. The gracefully executed open-string stairway would preclude, however, a very early date of construction, as it exhibits a refinement associated with 19th century detail, as well as a marked similarity to regional examples dating from the first quarter of this century.

2. Architect: Not known. The house is undoubtedly the product of a skilled craftsman/builder. Several stonemasons were practicing in central Kentucky about 1800, but no specific attribution has yet been located. "Architects" as such were unknown at the time. Lewis Craig was a Baptist preacher and stonemason who came to Mason County about 1790. He is credited with the construction of the Mason County Courthouse at Washington in 1794 (destroyed in 1909). As yet no record of another stonemason operating in Washington about 1800 has been located, although there are accounts of several stone buildings in the town by 1825. Craig has not been linked with the construction of the stone house, and since no other stone building remains in the town, there is no point of comparison. Existing photos of Craig's courthouse indicate stonework which is more dressed and regularly coursed than that of the stone house. The possibility exists, however tenuous, of a connection between Craig and the stone house. Early owners included Daniel Carroll (1799-1800) and Enoch Berry (1800-1808). They were possibly engaged in some form of building activities, as early court records show that Carroll was commissioned in 1796 to cover the bridge over the North Fork, Licking River with "three inch oak plank." In a law suit in 1813, it was stated that Enoch Berry built a bridge over the same river. It is not clear whether they served as builders or as overseers of the work.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which the structure stands. Reference is to the office of the County Court Clerk, Mason County, Kentucky.

Mason County Deed Book F, Page 188-Plat of town of Washington, 1794. The house is located on south half of lot 37.

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|--------------|--|
| Deed Book A, | Page 210 --- June 22, 1790 --- William Wood and Arthur Fox to John Pickett --- in-lot 37 --- from northeast corner eight poles. N.B.: Listing in deed book index is "Puckett" instead of "Pickett". |
| Deed Book B, | Page 422 --- July 1, 1799 --- John Pickett to Daniel Carroll --- part of in-lot 37 bounded on north by John Machir, south by Joshua Baker (lot 35), east by Main ---" . . . it being the same whereon Dr. William Goforth has erected the frame of a house and contains one half of the said lot, being the southwardly half thereof." |
| Deed Book F, | Page 429 --- July 28, 1800 --- Daniel Carroll to Enoch Berry --- south half in-lot 37 --- same description as above. |

Deed Book K,	Page 202 --- August 25, 1808 --- Enoch Berry to John Atkinson (also spelled Atchison), trustee of Sally Rust (wife of John Rust) --- south half in-lot 37 --- same description as above --- bounded on south by Brodrick (lot 35), and on north by John Machir, "now Sam'l Ganby."
Deed Book 47,	Page 499 --- July 20, 1839 --- David Wood to John Brough --- "stone dwelling house and frame building occupied as a shop" --- 72.5' frontage on Main from SE corner of stone house.
Deed Book 48,	Page 218 --- October 28, 1839 --- John Brough to David Richey (trustee) and Martha Richey (formerly Martha Sandidge) --- Same description as above.
Deed Book 50,	Page 102 --- April 26, 1841 --- Andrew Richey to Harrison Taylor (sold by A. Richey, Martha Richey, and David Richey, trustee for Martha Richey) --- 45.5' frontage on Main north from SE corner of stone house --- including alley (house is 34' Wide).
Deed Book 58,	Page 169 -- January 12, 1849 --- Harrison Taylor to John Green --- (See also Deed Book 52, Page 402 --- mentions stone house belonging to Taylor --- April 28, 1843).
Deed Book 74,	Page 513 --- September 24, 1870 --- Ann Green and Richard Green to Robert Hunter.
Deed Book 90,	Page 420 --- March 30, 1889 --- Robert Hunter to Moses Lane.
Deed Book 118,	Page 237 --- May 6, 1916 --- A. G. Susler, Master Commissioner, to Harrison Kirk (result of court action of Th. Lane against W. L. Gault, Administrator of Moses Lane --- died July, 1913).
Deed Book 126,	Page 247 --- March 2, 1925 --- Harrison Kirk to James and Bessie Williams.
Deed Book 133,	Page 341 --- April 18, 1934 --- Bessie Williams to R. M. Catron.
Deed Book 166,	Page 175 --- May 28, 1963 --- Henry Catron to Jesse Hesler and William Pascal Combess.

Deed Book 170, Page 267 --- December 24, 1964 --- Jesse Hesler to
 Robert Beckett.

Deed Book 170, Page 377 --- January 9, 1965 --- Robert Beckett to
 James F. Minton.

Deed Book 183, Page 165 --- July 13, 1970 --- J. F. Minton to
 James Allen.

4. Original plans and construction: No original construction plans have been found. The stone portion of the house, rectangular in shape, probably constitutes the original plan.
5. Alterations and additions: Despite a few physical changes, the building is little altered. A clapboard ell was added to the northwestern corner of the building, circa 1876. It was originally one-story in height, and second floor was added in the 20th century. In order to provide entrance to the second floor ell, the original rear window in the stone portion of the house was converted into a doorway. The rear window in the parlor in the first floor was at one time a doorway, and there is evidence that the downstairs window on the north side of the stairhall is not original. Traditionally, stone houses of this type did not have windows in the end walls, and the framing of this particular downstairs window differs from that of the other windows. The stone work around this window shows evidence of patching. In the mid-19th century the exterior was plastered, which was allowed to deteriorate and is no longer in evidence.

B. Historical Context:

Local tradition has established this house as the residence of Arthur Fox, Sr., who with William Wood, was one of the founders of Washington. Fox and Wood were deeded in 1789 the land on which Washington was founded in 1786, and in 1790 they sold the lot on which the house stands to John Pickett, who played a role in the development of the town. Other early owners included Daniel Carroll and Enoch Berry, both of whom were also instrumental in the development of the town. After 1808, the property was for a number of years the home of John Rust, a Revolutionary War soldier from Fauquier County, Virginia. His wife was Sally (Sarah) Mason, of the family of "Gunston Hall", and for whom Mason County, Kentucky, was named. Harrison Taylor, who owned the house from 1841 to 1849, was a lawyer and descendant of an early Washington family.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: At a time when frontier settlements were still being established west of the thirteen original states, the house is an early example of permanent, more refined residential architecture.
2. Condition of fabric: The stone portion of the house is in excellent condition. The rear ell is in good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The L-shaped house measures 34' (three-bay front) x 40'-9". It is two-and-a-half stories high.
2. Foundations: There is 24" thick coursed limestone forming a five foot crawlspace.
3. Walls: The walls are of grey undressed limestone. A hint of rustication exists at the corners of the stone part of the house. A later addition to the rear is of frame construction with beaded clapboards which are painted white.
4. Structural system, framing: Stone bearing walls support joists at the first and second floors of the original structure, while the addition employs frame walls for this purpose. Both roofs are simple wood rafters with no ridge beams.
5. Stoops: A two-step stoop of cut limestone leads to a limestone walk from the front (east) door. The kitchen on the south side of the house is approached by a set of wooden steps of dimensional lumber.
6. Chimneys: A chimney with two flues is on the south side of the stone portion of the house, rising above roofline. Another chimney projects from the west (rear) side of the rear ell, also rising above roof line.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The entry door is a four-paneled mortise and tenon door with a four-light transom window above, behind a modern louvered door with one lock rail. At either the south or the north end, a thin metal-clad door in a wood frame provides access to the attic above the stone

portion. The kitchen door is a four-paneled mortise and tenon door with a modern metal screen door. A continuous cut and dressed stone lintel (in sections) runs over two windows and the door in the front wall of the house.

- b. Windows and shutters: East (front) windows in the stone portion are double-hung twelve-over-twelve light sash on the ground floor, and eight-over-twelve light sash on the second floor. The north window of the stone portion on the first floor is double-hung six-over-six light sash. All windows in the frame addition are double-hung single sash with "Pop in" six-over-six muntins. Newspaper and magazine photos from the mid-1950s show shutters on the house.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: A gable roof with flat corrugated sheet metal covering, covers the stone part. An intersecting gable roof covered with the same material covers the rear frame wing.
- b. Cornice: A box cornice covers the roof rafters on the east and west facades of the stone portion.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: A dirt floored crawlspace is under the entire house.
- b. First floor: The entrance in the right bay of the east elevation leads to a hallway. To the left of this is the parlor. A doorway west of the hall leads to the rear ell housing the kitchen. The kitchen is also entered by another doorway on the exterior south side of the rear ell.
- c. Second floor: A stairway on the north side of the first floor hallway leads to the second floor. A bedroom is in the south side of the stone portion. To the west is the rear ell with a bath to the left, a closet to the right, and a sitting room in the rear.
- d. Attic: There is no interior doorway for the attic. It is entered only through a small window-sized doorway on either exterior side elevation of the stone portion, reached by means of a ladder.

2. Stairways: The open-string, open-well main stair with a 180° turn has decorative scrollwork. A simple elliptical handrail runs through both floors, broken by newels at the second floor landing. The handrail is of cherry.
3. Flooring: Both portions have hardwood flooring throughout. The floor in the stone portion is wider and is probably of poplar.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The wall material throughout the two portions of the house is plaster, painted, with the exception of the kitchen walls, which are of modern veneer paneling.
5. Doors: All doors in the two portions are paneled wood, though not identical.
6. Trim: Simple chairrails and baseboards enhance all rooms in the stone portion. The stairway wall and the walls in the fireplace areas are paneled.
7. Hardware: Paneled doors have original hardware.
8. Mechanical equipment: The fireplaces in the principal rooms are all bricked-up.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces approximately 5° South of East (95°), fronting on Main Street (old U.S. Route 68). An original limestone walk of the town of Washington remains in front of the facade. One of 22 original wells of Washington is located just to the rear of the kitchen.
2. Outbuildings:
 - a. Gardener's Shed: A modern gardener's shed (12' x 24') exists to the rear (west) of the house.
 - b. Tool Shed: A tool shed (12' x 6') exists to the rear (west) of the house.

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Historic American Buildings Survey
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PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Early Views: The following newspapers and magazine show photos of the house:

Maysville Daily Independent, August 12, 1965.
(Courtesy of Mrs. W. W. Weis)

Maysville Daily Independent, October 23, 1954.
(Courtesy of Mrs. W. W. Weis)

Magazine photo (J. Winston Coleman), Mid-1950's
(Courtesy of Limestone Chapter, DAR, Paxton Inn.
Washington, Kentucky).

- B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Deed Books: Mason County Court Clerk's Office, Maysville,
Kentucky.

Will Book A, p. 51, Mason County Court Clerk's Office - Arthur
Fox's Will. September 19, 1793.

Maysville, Kentucky. Mason County Museum. "Gleanings from the
old Court Records of Mason County, Kentucky, 1789-1800" [by Lula
Reed Boss]. Typed manuscript.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Bits Of Mason County Heritage. Washington, Kentucky: Limestone
Chapter, DAR, pp. 47-51.

Best, Edna Hunter. The Historic Past of Washington, Mason
County, Kentucky. Cynthiana, Kentucky: The Hobson Press, 1944.

Clift, G. Glenn. History of Maysville and Mason County.
Lexington, Kentucky: Transylvania Printing Co., Inc.. 1936.

Daily Independent. Newspaper articles. October 23, 1954.
August 12, 1965. Maysville, Kentucky.

Lee, Lucy C. An Historical Sketch of Mason County, Kentucky.
Louisville, Kentucky: Masonic House Journal Press, 1925.

Mason County Museum, Maysville, Kentucky. "Revolutionary
Soldiers, Mason and Fleming Counties" Folder.

Mason County Museum, Maysville, Kentucky. Berry Family Geneology Folder.

Newcomb, Rexford. Architecture in Old Kentucky. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1953.

Pillsbury, Richard, and Kardos, Andrew. A Field Guide to the Folk Architecture of the Northeastern United States. Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth College.

Wooley, Carolyn Murray. "Kentucky's Early Stone Houses," The Magazine Antiques, Volume CV; No. 3 (March, 1974), pp. 592-602.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in co-operation with Old Washington, Inc. in the summer of 1975. Under the supervision of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, a documentation of nine structures and one site was produced by Perry Benson (University of Pennsylvania), the project supervisor; Ronald Burch (Cornell University), the project historian; Mark Hall (Pennsylvania State University), Kenneth Payson (Cornell University), William F. Petell (Syracuse University) and Steven Shapiro (University of Maryland), student assistant architects. Susan McCown, a HABS staff historian in the Washington, D.C. office, edited the written data for preparation of transmittal to the Library of Congress.